



Legislation Text

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Res. No. 2094

Resolution calling upon the New York State Department of Health to require that all ambulances carry insulin to be able to treat patients in the event of a diabetes-related health emergency.

By Council Members Stewart, Barron, Koppell, Nelson, Palma, Weprin and Liu

Whereas, According to the American Diabetes Association, diabetes is a disease where a person's body does not produce or properly utilize insulin, a necessary hormone that converts sugar and other foods into energy; and

Whereas, As of June 2008, approximately 24 million people suffered from diabetes, representing nearly 8 percent of the country's population, according to the United States Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (the "CDC"); and

Whereas, Additionally, the CDC estimates that another 57 million people have pre-diabetes, which places individuals at a higher risk of suffering from this disease; and

Whereas, CDC data indicates that nationwide, diabetes is the seventh leading cause of death, accounting for nearly 234,000 deaths annually; and

Whereas, Diabetes can cause further serious health complications including heart disease, blindness, kidney failure, and lower-extremity amputations; and

Whereas, While the causes of diabetes are unclear, it is believed that genetic predisposition, obesity and living a sedentary lifestyle contribute to the prevalence of this disease; and

Whereas, According to the National Diabetes Information Clearinghouse, diabetes-related mortality, the associated health care costs of treating individuals with diabetes and lost time and wages, totaled \$174 billion in 2007; and

Whereas, In New York City, diabetes has become an epidemic due to significant increases in obesity; and

Whereas, According to the New York City Department of Health and Mental Hygiene (“DOHMH”), it is estimated that 700,000 New York City residents suffer from diabetes and nearly a third are unaware that they have this disease; and

Whereas, Of the number of New Yorkers with diabetes, DOHMH estimates that more than 100,000 are at high risk of heart attack, stroke, kidney failure, blindness and amputations; and

Whereas, DOHMH recommends that individuals with diabetes constantly monitor and control their blood sugar, blood pressure and cholesterol, as well as regularly exercise, maintain a healthy diet and take prescribed medications; and

Whereas, According to DOHMH’s Diabetes in New York City: Public Health Burden and Disparities report, diabetes-related hospitalizations, increased by 20 percent from 1994 to 2003; and

Whereas, The DOHMH report also indicates that in 2003, nearly 40 percent of diabetic-related hospitalizations in the City were for short-term, potentially life-threatening complications, including diabetic ketoacidosis, hyperosmolarity and coma; and

Whereas, By administering insulin, intravenous fluids, potassium and sodium, a patient can be effectively treated for these conditions; and

Whereas, Article 30 of the New York State Public Health law empowers the New York State Department of Health to set statewide emergency medical services policy and appoint regional emergency medical services councils to take into account the needs of particular regions; and

Whereas, In New York City, the Regional Emergency Medical Services Council of New York City (“REMSCO”), coordinates emergency medical services, including treatment and equipment protocols; and

Whereas, Yet REMSCO has not required all ambulances throughout New York City to carry insulin; and

Whereas, Emergency medical workers in New York City, therefore, do not have the option of

administering insulin when responding to an individual with diabetes exhibiting potentially life-threatening complications; and

Whereas, Mandating that all ambulances carry insulin would improve the level of care performed by the emergency medical workers and may help diabetic patients experience better outcomes; now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Council of the City of New York calls upon the New York State Department of Health to require that all ambulances carry insulin to be able to treat patients in the event of a diabetes-related health emergency.

JM
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